

Event Planning Tips for Town Center Park

The spring and fall are the busiest times of the year for us at Town Center Park. This makes a perfect setting for an outdoor event. Based on our experience, here are a few tips to help assure a successful outdoor event. Additional requirements may be given depending on the event.

Event Attendance:

Event size will determine many factors for your event. Knowing your attendance will help determine what you need. Attendance size is a measurable threshold where many decisions will be determined. See the breakout by permit size in our Special Events Policy and application to determine what will be needed for your event. The event policy includes a breakdown of many areas of logistics to consider. It is required that you turn in a final layout 14 days prior to your event so these areas can be reviewed by city staff in case recommendations need to be made for your event.

Event Banners:

The City of Suwanee has 3 locations to place banners advertising your event. You may submit up to 2 banners to be placed in these locations. These banners could go up as early as two weeks ahead of your event date depending on availability. These banners will be supplied by the event organizer and should be 8 feet wide and 3 to 4 feet tall. They must have metal grommets in them. They will be placed at the park, at Buford Hwy and McGinnis Ferry Road, near I-85. Any other banners placed in the city limits promoting your event MUST have a sign permit. Any banners placed without approval and without the sign permit will be removed.

Restrooms:

Portable restrooms may be required for all events of 4 hours duration or more. Portable restroom may be required for any event where alcohol is served and for any walk or run. Generally, one toilet for every 200 persons is the ratio to determine the number needed. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, one unit should be handicap accessible. Restroom placement must have the approval of the events manager and should be on a hard surface. Any units brought in for an event must be removed by noon on the first business day after the event.

Town Center has permanent restroom facilities located behind the stage. The public works staff will maintain these restrooms during all events.

Trash:

The City of Suwanee Public Works Department will be onsite for event set-up and clean-up. The public works department will remove trash from the trash containers in the park and from any additional containers set up to collect trash during the event. If your event has an attendance of over 5,000 attendees, you will be asked to provide an onsite trash receptacle (dumpster or trash truck with cans) at your expense.

You may choose to trade these services for a booth space or rent for a fee. The dumpster location must have the approval of the events manager and should be on a hard surface. Any dumpster brought in for an event must be removed by noon on the first business day after the event.

Electricity:

The park has power in designated areas of the park like two of the four flower beds, the food court area, and the center section of the park. When laying out your vendor map, it is important to keep in mind who needs power and where they are placed in the park. When bringing in inflatables or children's rides, the event organizer will be required to bring in generators to power these onsite. The center section of the park is now equipped with three quick connect power poles. Each of these poles has 8-plugs or 20 amp connections. Vendors should bring their own power cords to connect to power. Extension cords should be high quality, with no rips, frayed cords or plugs or taped cords. Backup power in the form of generators will need to be brought in for your event in some cases if you have power requirements beyond what the park is capable of handling. When your final event layout is submitted 30 days prior to your event, you will be notified if generators will need to be brought in to supply adequate power. When arranging for generator power, ask about having standby generators on site in case of a breakdown. (You can sometimes negotiate this for very little additional cost.) Vendors should supply their own 12/3 gauge power cords 50 to 100 feet in length.

Communications:

The more spread out you are within the site, the more important communications becomes. Consider providing a cell phone contact list to volunteers and event staff. You may also consider renting radios to be used onsite for communication. The city has 15 radios that can be used during the event. If you need more than those 15 radios, you will need to rent them.

Parking and Shuttle Service:

If your estimated attendance is over 7,000 people at one time or at your peak time, you will need to seek offsite parking and shuttle buses to assist attendees in getting to your event. Offsite parking may be secured from church or business lots. You will be responsible for contacting lots for permission to use them and to advertise them as shuttle and offsite parking lots. You may use any form of transportation to shuttle attendees like trolley cars, buses, daycare buses, church vans, etc. Shuttles transportation is at the expense of the event organizer.

The city has event parking signs and they are available for event organizers to use. You may put them out and you are responsible for picking them up and returning them to the city after your event.

Event Rentals:

The layout of your event should designate where any rental items are going to be placed for your event. This includes tents, tables and chairs, children's rides, games and inflatables, generators, and any sponsor displays. At NO TIME, should any vehicles be driven on the sidewalks of Town Center Park. Violations of this rule could lead to the vendor vehicle being

issued a citation. It is the responsibility of the event organizer to communicate this rule to all vendors. All rental items must be removed from the park immediately following the event or by noon on the first business day after the event. Any items removed after noon on the first business day could result in a forfeiture of the Park Use Deposit.

Event organizers need to be in the park to accept and arrange for all rental deliveries. City staff may be able to assist as long as maps, directions, and instructions have been clearly communicated. It is the event organizers responsibility to make sure all rentals are stored to the expectation of the rental company like all tents and tables stacked under one or two locations.

Children's rides, games and Inflatables:

Events that offer these types of rides and games are usually very popular with families. They are also a great money maker for event organizers. When selecting a vendor, please make sure they are aware of the park rules. No driving on the sidewalks for set up, no staking down the inflatables, and they MUST provide a generator to run all power to their equipment. We also require that you work with the vendor to protect the turf and park surfaces. Mats are needed in high traffic areas (entry and exit points of rides and inflatables) to protect the turf.

First Aid:

Safety precautions are particularly important for any event. For all events of 4 hours duration or more, medical personnel will be required to be on site. EMT, RN, LPN, or paramedics may serve for Class C, D, or E permits. RN, LPN or paramedics must serve for a Class A or B permit. Medical supplies are the responsibility of the event organizer. If there is a life threatening emergency, please call 911 immediately.

Weather:

Monitor weather forecasts. Most events in Town Center Park are held RAIN or SHINE. If there is a danger to attendees, events may need to be shortened or in extreme cases, cancelled or rescheduled.

Mind the wind. Wind is a frequent outdoor hazard. Assume everything can blow over and anchor them accordingly. Remember, you cannot stake things into the ground or tie them off to poles, trees, or other fixtures in the park. Tents and inflatables should always be weighted for wind resistance. Water in buckets or gas cans make excellent tent weights. Event organizers are responsible for providing their own weights.

Vendors, Exhibitors, Sponsors and Booth Space:

It is up to the event organizer to decide costs/fees for booth space at an event. It is also up to the event organizer to decide who can have a booth at your event. If your event is several hours in length, you may decide to bring in a few vendors for a fee to help cover costs associated with the event. Booth fees can be as little as \$25 and as much as \$7500 for a sponsorship. Average booth fees range from \$50 to \$400 depending on the size of the booth and the estimated attendance of the event.

Please be mindful that there are many food establishments in Town Center Park. It would be best to not bring in duplicates of the food items already available in the park. There are already several places to eat pizza, or get a frozen treat. Pizza and ice cream vendors are abundantly available in the park and should not need to be brought in for an event. No vendors should be brought in the park that will be cooking in grease or oil. The only exceptions are vendors that are in a self-contained cooking trailer (catering style). Every precaution should be taken by vendors to protect park surfaces from spills, grill drippings, and food debris. Ice can NOT be dumped on the grass. Ice should only be dumped on the roadway or sidewalks.

All vendors names should be submitted to the events manager with your final layout.

Sound System Requirements:

Any event is permitted to amplify sound in the park. The City of Suwanee does not provide sound equipment. If speakers will be stacked on the stage, no special equipment will be required. If speakers will be "hung" from the stage (aka "flying" speakers) then the sound company will need to bring in a lift or rigger. Scissor lifts will not be provided by the city and may be brought in from a sound or rental company. The event organizer should communicate load in times for the sound system with the events manager. The sound company may want to know that the stage is equipped with 400 watt quick connects for sound and lighting power. Please make sure the company knows they are NOT allowed on the park sidewalks at any time. All equipment must be unloaded on the sidewalk and rolled around on the sidewalk to the stage area.

Fire Marshal Inspections for tents:

Any canopy over 700 square feet (or over 400 square feet if sides will be on the tent) will need a fire marshal inspection prior to the event opening to the public. Please contact Gwinnett County Fire for an inspection and instructions for tent inspections. Any costs for supplies and inspections are the responsibility of the event organizer.

Gwinnett County Health Inspections:

The City of Suwanee submits all approved dates to the county board of health each year. This should prevent the need for onsite health inspections of all events. Vendors and event organizers are responsible for following all local food safety standards and food safe practices.

Alcohol:

Events that wish to serve alcohol will be required to complete the Special Event Alcohol Permit Application. This application will be provided by the event manager when your event application is approved. A city permit and state permit are both required for any event approved to serve alcohol.

Items to have on hand for events:

- First Aid Kit
- Bungee Cords
- Zip Ties

- Duct Tape
- Clothes pins to clip signs to tents
- Extra Extension Cords, heavy duty, 100 feet in length
- 5 gallon buckets (as needed for extra tent weights)
- Electrical flags (make great booth markers or tent markers for rental companies)
- Water soluble spray paint to mark booth spaces
- Vendor and rental company phone list
- Extra event layout map
- Rope or string for tent weights
- Clip boards to hold down paper in windy conditions
- Small tool box with a hammer, screwdriver, knife or box cutter
- Towels to wipe down tables from rain or morning dew